



**Functional Series 200
Programming Policy**

INTERIM UPDATE 08-08

SUBJECT: Issuance of Revised ADS 200, 201, 202, and 203 – Agency Programming Policy

NEW MATERIAL: This Interim Update announces that ADS chapters 200, 201, 202, and 203 have been revised to address Agency reforms that have substantively impacted the conceptual framework supporting USAID's programming process. These revised chapters conform to ADS 101, Agency Programs and Functions and ADS 103, Delegations of Authority.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/01/2008

- ATTACHMENT:**
1. [ADS Chapter 200, Introduction to Programming Policy](#)
 2. [Additional Technical Analyses for Developing Strategic Plans](#)
 3. [Strategic Planning – Frequently Asked Questions](#)
 4. [USAID Implementing Mechanisms](#)
 5. [ADS Chapter 201, Planning](#)
 6. [ADS Chapter 202, Achieving](#)
 7. [ADS Chapter 203, Assessing and Learning](#)

POLICY

USAID/General Notice
M/MPBP/POL
12/11/2008

Subject: Issuance of Revised Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapters 200, 201, 202, and 203 - Agency Programming Policy

The Automated Directive System (ADS) series 200 governs USAID's programming policy. ADS chapters 200, 201, 202, and 203 have been revised to address Agency reforms that have substantively impacted the conceptual framework supporting USAID's programming process. These revised chapters conform to ADS 101, Agency Programs and Functions and ADS 103, Delegations of Authority. The following is a summary of the major changes:

Chapter 200: (Introduction to Programming Policy)

Introduces how USAID conducts joint planning with State and other USG agencies. The operational aspect of the vision of transformational diplomacy requires that foreign assistance is used as effectively as possible to meet the broad foreign policy objectives of the USG and is more fully aligned with the foreign assistance activities carried out by the Department of State and USAID. A key approach to achieving the desired alignment between the two agencies is joint planning at the agency and country levels, such as the State-USAID Strategic Plan, Country Assistance Strategies, Mission Strategic Plans, and Operational Plans.

Introduces a new definition of operating units to include other USG agencies.

Clarifies that the "old" USAID operating units are referred to as USAID Missions/Offices throughout the series.

Introduces the Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (DFA), the Office of USAID's Chief Operating Officer (COO), the Bureau for Management's Office of Management Policy, Budget and Performance (MPBP).

Chapter 201: (Planning)

Introduces Assistance Objectives as a replacement term for Strategic Objectives and Assistance Agreements as a replacement term for Strategic Objective Agreements (SOAGs).

Introduces the three levels of planning: strategic (country) level; Assistance Objective (program) level; and project/activity level. Three fundamental dimensions characterize USAID's role in planning:

- a) Strategic Planning, where under the direction of the Director of Foreign Assistance, USAID collaborates with other USG agencies to formulate a coordinated "whole of government" foreign assistance strategy;
- b) Assistance Objective (AO) planning, which occurs at USAID program level. AOs are covered by joint country assistance strategies as well as USAID strategic plans and provide comprehensive long-term vision to achieve clearly defined foreign assistance results;
- c) Project Planning, which occurs at USAID's well-established collaborative project and activity level, ensuring attention to technical issues and USG statutory requirements.

Describes the joint country assistance strategies (CAS) and USAID country strategic plans. USAID collaborates with other USG agencies to formulate a coordinated foreign assistance strategy at the country level. However, in countries where a CAS is not being developed and is not planned in the immediate future, USAID Missions or Offices may

prepare their own strategies. When that country completes a CAS, the USAID strategy will need to be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure that it is consistent with the CAS.

Requires Results Frameworks at the Assistance Objective (AO) [old SO level].

Offers the Logical Framework as an optional tool for the project/activity planning level.

Distinguishes between DFA program Hierarchy as a budgeting and reporting tool and USAID Results Framework as a strategic planning tool and offers a visual cross-walk.

Chapter 202: (Achieving)

Describes rationale for using Assistance Objective Teams for program management and explains procedures for their formation and function.

Codifies Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) requirements related to administrative and financial responsibilities and limitations, including who can be designated to serve as a CTO on AO Teams.

Differentiates CTO and Activity/Project Manager Roles.

Chapter 203: (Assessing and Learning)

Introduces standard indicators (and custom indicators) and mandates at least one evaluation in the life of an AO.

Technical Chapters:

All the technical chapters will be updated in the near future.

New Mandatory References:

"Strategic Planning: Frequently Asked Questions" describes the requirements for a "whole of government" approach to country assistance strategy (CAS) and clarifies the difference between a CAS and a USAID-only strategic plan.

"Additional Technical Analyses for Developing Strategic Plans" establishes environmental and gender technical analysis requirements for strategic plan development. Other selected analysis should be specified when planning parameters are set.

Help Documents:

"USAID Implementing Mechanisms" Additional Help document provides advice on pros and cons of using country, USAID, or third-party managed mechanisms.

Other Help Documents will be updated in the next revision of the ADS 200 series.
Other:

Includes amendments to conform to ADS 101, Agency Programs and Functions, and ADS 103, Delegations of Authority.

A 508-compliant version will be issued shortly.

Point of Contact: Any questions concerning this Notice may be directed to Colleen Allen, M/MPBP/POL, (202) 712-0378.

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